



## News Sheet – December 2017

### Diary Dates – December 2017

- 1<sup>st</sup> West Midland Theatre Play – Dick Whittington (£2 per pupil)
- 4<sup>th</sup> Year 7 Taster Day at St John The Baptist College
- 6<sup>th</sup> Christmas Panto at Market Place Theatre  
Pupil Council Meeting
- 7<sup>th</sup> Last night of homework – Term 1  
St John The Baptist College Talent Show
- 8<sup>th</sup> Canteen Christmas Dinner for pupils
- 11<sup>th</sup> Choir / Instrumentalists to Mahon Hall Nursing Home
- 13<sup>th</sup> Choir / Instrumentalists to Rushmere Shopping Centre
- 14<sup>th</sup> Choir to Community Carol Service at St. Patrick's Church
- 15<sup>th</sup> Christmas Draws in Assembly
- 18<sup>th</sup> Primary School Christmas Performances – 10am & 1.30pm
- 19<sup>th</sup> Nursery Christmas Nativity – 10am  
School finishes at 1pm for all pupils
- 21<sup>st</sup> Christmas Jumper Day for Charity  
Christmas Parties and disco
- 22<sup>nd</sup> Last day of term, no uniform, no dinners, school finishes at midday for all pupils.  
Dismissal times to reduce congestion: Years 1 – 3: 11.50am; Years 4 – 7: 12 noon

### Christmas Holidays

School will be closed from Monday 25<sup>th</sup> December 2017 to Friday 5<sup>th</sup> January 2018. Term 2 begins on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> January 2018. Please note Friday 5<sup>th</sup> January is an extra holiday for pupils. Staff will be training on this day.

### Christmas Performance

The Primary School will again be having two performances on the same day Monday 18<sup>th</sup> December – one starting at 10am and the other at 1.30pm. On this day all Year 1 – 3 pupils will stay in school until 3pm. The Nursery will be having their own Christmas Nativity separate from the Primary School on Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> December 2017 at 10am. All 3 performances are ticket only and information regarding ticket ordering has already been issued.

### Christmas Raffle & Squares

One book of tickets has been issued to every family. Please support our Parents and Friends by selling these. More booklets are available if required. The Draw will take place in Assembly on Friday 15<sup>th</sup> December 2017. All ticket stubs, money and unsold tickets must be returned to school by **Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> December 2017**. The Christmas Squares draw will take place on the same date and these can be bought in classes at 50p each.

### Christmas Post

This will begin on Monday 4<sup>th</sup> December 2017. Please ensure the following are put on the envelopes: Both names, Year Group e.g. Year 1 and Teacher's Name.

## **Christmas Card designed by pupils**

These will be sent home this week, please return with order form and money by **Friday 8<sup>th</sup> December 2017** if you wish to order these.

## **Choir and Instrumentalists**

Once again the Choir and Instrumentalists have a busy Christmas Programme with a number of engagements. They will be appearing in Mahon Hall Nursing Home on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> December 2017, Rushmere Shopping Centre on Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> December 2017 and the Carol Service at St Patrick's Church on Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> December at 7.30pm with St John The Baptist College, St John The Baptist Primary and Presentation Primary and I would encourage you to support them by going along to hear them at Rushmere and the Carol Service.

## **Coats**

As the weather has been turning colder in recent weeks, we have been advising pupils to bring a warm coat to school. From Monday 4<sup>th</sup> December 2017, any pupils who do not bring a coat to school will have to remain inside at break and lunch time.

## **Year 4 Visit to INTO Film**

On Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> November the two Year 4 classes went to Lough Neagh Discovery Centre to see the animated film: *My neighbour Totoro*, organised by INTO FILM NI. None of the children had seen the film before, so the story was completely new to them. The children learned how film is another medium for telling stories and about the work that goes into animated filmmaking in terms of art, science and technology. The children were encouraged to use stories/real life situations to become film makers themselves. The children are writing a review about this film, the best of which, will be sent to London for (hopeful) inclusion in the INTO Film Review magazine.

## **Nursery News**

### **Mackeys Eye Care Visit Nursery**

On Friday 17<sup>th</sup> November Caroline and Elaine from Mackey's Eye Care visited the Nursery. They encourage eye tests for all children of Nursery age.

### **Nursery Football Coaching**

On Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> November, the children in the Nursery enjoyed their first visit from Coach Chris. We developed our football skills and look forward to his next visit.

## **Dental Visit to LSC**

On Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> November, the Dental Nurse Pauline Jackson visited LSC. She demonstrated how to brush correctly using a toothbrush and artificial set of teeth and gums. Pauline performed the 'dye test' on each pupil and emphasised the importance of brushing teeth at least twice each day.

## **Parent/Teacher Meetings**

A big thank you to everyone who supported their child's education by attending our Parent/Teachers at the end of October. The attendance rate was a very pleasing 92%.

## **Pupil Attendance**

The average Pupil Attendance for October was 93.8%. Well done to the classes with the highest attendance for October which were Yr 3 and Yr 7.

### **Parents Numeracy Workshop**

A Numeracy workshop was held with Timothy Doyle (Maths Improvement NI) on Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> November. Timothy showed parents useful fun interactive websites to help parents work with their children to foster a love for Numeracy and to engage in Problem Solving activities. It was a very relaxed atmosphere and the parents enjoyed the session.

### **Year 2 Young Enterprise**

Year 2 pupils have successfully completed their Young Enterprise programme. Year 2 followed the 'Ourselves' programme where the pupils explored the 'world of work' and the importance of saving, earning, decision making and teamwork. All of the pupils thoroughly enjoyed the activities.

### **Year 3 Young Enterprise**

Year 3 have been taking part in Young Enterprise workshops. Their topic is 'My Family'. They have been learning about the different roles of family members and the importance of belonging to a family.

### **Year 3 Trip to Armagh County Museum**

Year 3 have been learning about Houses and Homes in Term 1. They visited Armagh Museum to learn about homes in the past. The children discovered that life was very different in the 1900s. They had lots of fun.

### **Accelerated Reader – Update**

All Key Stage 2 children are now participating in the Accelerated Reader programme. There has been a fantastic response to this from children with many children achieving their target of 85% and above. Parents are reminded that they can track their child's progress on the list of books that they've read on the Home Connect Website. This information was given out at parent teacher meetings. We are currently trying to increase our book stock, so we would ask parents if they have any used and unwanted books at home to please donate these to the school. There will be a book collection box sitting at reception.

### **Year 5 & 6 Millennium Arts Centre Workshops**

Year 5 and 6 enjoyed making snowflakes by folding and cutting paper with Hazel from the Millennium Arts Centre in Portadown. They then decorated their snowflakes with glitter and sparkles. The snowflakes will be displayed in the Millennium Arts Centre at the entrance so why not drop in if you are passing to view their work. The Millennium Arts Centre runs free art and craft sessions for children and adults and their courses can be viewed on their webpage if interested.

### **Year 1 Trip to Gosford Castle**

As part of their topic 'Kings, Queens and Castles', Year 1 pupils went on a day trip to Gosford Forest Park. They enjoyed a walk through the forest to find the castle. They walked around the outside of the castle and explored the grounds. The children looked for signs of Autumn and then spent some time in the play park before enjoying a picnic lunch. A great time was had by all.

### **Digital Leaders**

The Digital Leaders Team is made up of children from KS2 who had to apply for the role. This year the Digital Leaders will play a very important role in educating and teaching their friends about how to stay safe online. Children know that they can talk to our Digital Leaders

if they have a problem or need advice. The Digital Leaders wear a badge and their photos are displayed around the school.

Year 5 – Issey-Mae Byrne & Caoimhe O'Connor

Year 6 – Dayna Hughes, Elle McNeice, Aine Gorman and Luana Mota

Year 7 – Markuss Klinevics, Kajus Ciujevas and Kassie Blanton

### **Brownlow STEM Day**

Year 7 enjoyed a Sentinus Technology Day at Brownlow Integrated College on Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> November. The day involved pupils from Ballyoran and Bleary Primary School, working in twos or threes, to programme a robotic car, to make it follow a road with many curves and turns. The team who managed to stay within the road outlines received a £5 note, which was a great incentive for all involved. This year, two Ballyoran pupils, Antoni and Markuss were the overall winners. In the afternoon, pupils built rockets which were fired outside in an attempt to see whose rocket would stay up the longest. A very enjoyable day indeed for all involved!

### **Charity Update**

On Friday 17<sup>th</sup> November we had a non-uniform day to raise money for BBC Children in Need. Children came to school with mad hair and wearing spots. A big thank you to all the parents and children for their effort and kind donations. We raised a total of £450.50. The children should be very proud of themselves for raising this amount for such a worthwhile charity.

### **Anti-Bullying Week**

This year's Anti-Bullying Week was from Monday 13<sup>th</sup> November to Friday 17<sup>th</sup> November 2017. We marked it in the following ways:

- Pupils did activities related to anti-bullying in class.
- At least one homework had an anti-bullying theme.
- Assemblies had an anti-bullying theme.
- Every family received a 'Say NO to bullying' handbook for parents.

A major focus was what to do if you feel that you are being bullied and we all agree that telling someone you trust is vital, and then we can all help to change the situation. Remember, you don't have to put up with being bullied. Anti-Bullying work goes on all year round.

ChildLine 0800 1111

### **Tharp Family from USA**

On Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> November 2017, we had a visit from the Tharp Family from USA. This is the fourth year that they have visited Ballyoran and the visit took the form of a Musical Concert.

### **Admissions Paperwork**

Admission packs for Nursery and Year 1 applications for September 2018 are now available in school. This documentation is also available on the school website and the Education Authority website. The closing date for applications is Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> January 2018 at 12 noon.

### **Picking Pupils Up**

A significant number of pupils are not being picked up at the end of the school day on time. It is vital that parents are punctual when collecting their children otherwise they get anxious. If you are running late we would ask that you phone the office and inform us of this. If a child is

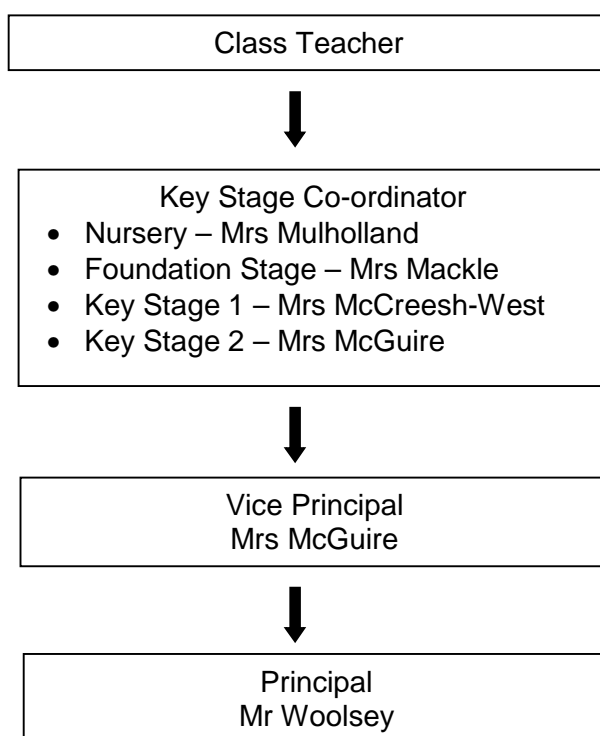
not collected and we are unable to make contact with parents/carers we have no option but to phone Social Services and/or the Police.

### Emergency Contact Details

It is vitally important that we hold up to date emergency contact details for our pupils. An increasing number of parents are not informing us when they change their mobile phone numbers. This is unacceptable and leaves us in a very difficult position if for example we needed to contact you if your child was seriously ill. I cannot stress the importance of this enough, please keep us up to date. Again as with late pick up, if we are unable to contact a parent/carer in the event of an emergency we will have no option but to refer this to Social Services.

### General Queries / Concerns

At Ballyoran Primary School we believe in a strong partnership with parents and communication between home and school is a vital part of this. Meetings can be arranged with staff at any time and we would encourage you to follow the flow chart below when raising general queries / concerns:



Obviously parents are free to make an appointment to speak to the Principal at any time.

### Christmas Gifts

This year we are again asking that instead of buying presents for staff that you consider donating food or toys to the St Vincent De Paul Christmas Appeal. Boxes will be placed in the foyer to receive your kind donations.

### Contingency Planning - Winter

As the winter is fast approaching, the school has been reviewing its contingency plans should the school need to close due to bad weather. Once again, we will be using our Text Alert system, the school website and local media to inform parents should a closure be necessary.

## School Christmas Card Competition 2017 Winners

Class	Winner	Runner Up
Year 1	Jose Da Silva Mendes	Beth Creaney
Year 2B	Victoria Da Silva	Nuria Encada Pires
Year 2	Sabina Baran	Lexi Carroll
Year 3	Jude Hall	Jaciara Mendes Da Silva
Year 4	Brooke McGeown	Jade McGeown
Year 4A	Djasmine Domingos	Sebastian Kottus
Year 5	Patryk Gorgol	Emilijus Bulvydas
Year 6	Aoife Madden	Milana Valiute
Year 6 M	Mafalda Lopes	Caitlin Reynolds
Year 7	Alisha McConville	Gabriele Matuleviciute
LSC	Jamie Campbell	Ryanlee Flynn

Overall Winner: Alisha McConville (Yr 7)

### Cash for Kids

Make a real difference to the lives of local children this Christmas by dropping off an unwrapped gift at one of three Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council facilities. Ashgrove Community Centre, Portadown Town Hall and Killicomaine Jubilee Community Centre are official drop-off points for this year's Cash for Kids Mission Christmas campaign. If you would like to help, buy just one extra present suitable for children and young people aged 0 to 18 years and drop-off unwrapped to Ashgrove Community Centre, Portadown Town Hall or Killicomaine Jubilee Community Centre between 9am and 5pm Monday to Friday. Your gift will be given to a disadvantaged child to make their Christmas morning that little bit brighter.

### Inspection

As you have already been informed, the Education and Training Inspectorate carried out an inspection of our school this week. I am delighted to say that this was a very positive experience with very pleasing feedback. The inspectors were very happy with what they saw and have affirmed all the great work that goes on in our school on a daily basis. They were particularly impressed by the pupils they spoke to. The report will be published on the ETI website in due course and we will inform you when this happens.

### Menu for December

See last page

R Woolsey  
Principal

